

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 07987 241423Z  
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 7987

EXDIS - DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

FOR ATHERTON FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPL EG IS  
SUBJ: PRESENTATION OF EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS TO ISRAELIS

REF.: STATE 159179

1. I NOTE FROM REFTEL THAT YOU ARE THINKING OF PASSING THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL TO THE ISRAELIS 2-3 DAYS BEFORE THE TRIPARTITE MEETING. THE POINT PRESUMABLY WOULD BE TO GIVE BEGIN AND COMPANY A CHANCE TO STUDY THE DOCUMENT BEFORE THE EVENT IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT SOME SERIOUS NEGOTIATION MIGHT BEGIN TO TAKE PLACE IN LONDON.

2. AS MENTIONED IN OUR LAST TELCON, I AM OF TWO MINDS ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE. PUTTING THE EGYPTIAN DOCUMENT TO THE GOI BEFORE THE MEETING OPENS MAY ENTAIL MORE RISK THAN BENEFIT.

3. FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE, AND TO PUT IT MILDLY, THE NEXT SESSION BETWEEN THE EGYPTIANS AND THE ISRAELIS WILL PROBABLY NOT PRODUCE A BREAKTHROUGH.

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HOWEVER, SOME PROGRESS MAY BE POSSIBLE AND, AT WORST, SUCH A GATHERING IS A NECESSARY PREREQUISITE FOR A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY TO THE AREA AND FOR ANY TABLING IN SOME FORM OF US PROPOSALS. SO WE NEED TO GET THE PARTIES TO THE TABLE.

4. BUT IT IS POSSIBLE, PERHAPS EVEN LIKELY, THAT

AT LEAST THE FLAVOR OF WHATEVER WE GIVE THE ISRAELIS BEFORE THE MEETING WILL APPEAR IN THE PAPERS HERE WITHIN A DAY OR TWO. THAT COULD HAPPEN BOTH BECAUSE MOST EVERYTHING LEAKS IN ISRAEL, AND BECAUSE, DEPENDING ON THE NATURE OF THE EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL, BEGIN OR DAYAN OR OTHERS COULD FEEL UNDER IRRESTIBLE TEMPTATION TO DISPLAY EGYPTIAN UNREASONABLENESS TO A PUBLIC WHICH IS BEING HAMMERED BY BOTH PERES' AND WEIZMAN'S CHARACTERIZATIONS OF SADAT'S REASONABLENESS AND SINCERITY. SUCH A TURN OF EVENTS COULD THEN LEAD THE EGYPTIANS TO BLAST BACK THROUGH THEIR SPOOKESMAN OR PRESS, OR EVEN BACK OUT OF THE MEETING AT THE LAST MOMENT. JUDGING FROM KAMEL'S COMMENTS THEY CERTAINLY SEEM HISITANT ENOUGH ALREADY. THE ISRAELIS WOULD SURELY ASSUME THAT WHATEVER LEAKED OUT WOULD NOT RPT NOT TORPEDO THE MEETING YET, AS HAPPENED IN JERUSALEM IN JANUARY, BEGIN COULD AGAIN SUPPLY UNWITTINGLY ENOUGH PROVOCATIVE AMMUNITION FOR KAMEL ET AL TO CONVINCE SADAT TO RENEGE.

5. EVEN IF THE MEETING ITSELF WERE HELD, IT IS POSSIBLE WE COULD FIND OURSELVES 24 HOURS BEFORE THE LONDON MEETING IN A SITUATION IN WHICH THE ATMOSPHERE WAS INCREASINGLY SOURED, AS EACH SIDE IN PUBLIC TRIED TO PROVE THE OTHER'S PROPOSAL OUTRAGEOUS. AND THAT WOULD NO DOUBT LEAD SOME  
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TO ASK WHY THE US, INDEED THE PRESIDENT, WAS INVESTING PRESTIGE IN AN EFFORT WHICH WOULD SO OBVIOUSLY BE STILLBORN.

6. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOI WANTS THE MEETING BADLY. BEGIN WILL BE LOOKING FOR SOME EVIDENCE IN THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL WHICH WILL VALIDATE HIS HARD-NOSED NEGOTIATING TACTICS. I MAY BE ABLE TO CONVINCE HIM TO KEEP IT TOTALLY BETWEEN HIMSELF AND DAYAN UNTIL THE MEETING -- THOUGH OUR TRACK RECORD ON SUCH APPEALS IS PRETTY DISMAL.

7. FINALLY, EVEN THOUGH WE ARE PROBABLY GOING TO TRY TO RIDE A SICK HORSE FROM LONDON, IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO GET DAYAN AS FAR FROM BEGIN AS POSSIBLE WHEN DAYAN FIRST RECEIVES THE DOCUMENT. HE WOULD HAVE MORE LEEWAY TO EXPLORE ASPECTS OF IT IF HE DID NOT ARRIVE WITH BEGIN'S MARCHING ORDERS IN HIS POCKET FOR EVERY PARAGRAPH.

8. WITHOUT HAVING SEEN THE DOCUMENT IN QUESTION

I CANT BE CERTAIN, BUT I'M INCLINED TO THINK THE  
BALANCE TIPS IN FAVOR OF HAVING THE EGYPTIANS  
TABLE THEIR COUNTERPROPOSAL IN LONDON ON THE FIRST  
MORNING OF THE MEETING. LEWIS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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